

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**JAEGER PREDICTS VOTER TURNOUT WILL BE
COMPARABLE TO PREVIOUS ELECTIONS**

Bismarck, ND – Secretary of State Al Jaeger predicts approximately 231,000 North Dakotans will vote in Tuesday's election, many by absent voter's ballots cast by voters during the last few weeks before the election.

Jaeger's prediction translates into a voter turnout of approximately forty-eight percent of the state's estimated 481,351 eligible voters¹. This is slightly up from the previous mid-term election cycle in 1998 when voter turnout was forty-six percent. However, the figure is considerably down from voter turnout in 2000, which was sixty-two percent as a result of President of the United States and Governor appearing on the ballot.

Jaeger attributes the slight increase in turnout from 1998, the last non-presidential election cycle, to greater interest in the state's measures appearing on the ballot.

"Measures two and three are very important and understandable issues to all North Dakotans and many want to have a say in how they turnout," said Jaeger.

Jaeger also points to some county races across the state where contests for sheriff, auditor, and state's attorney are driving turnout.

"The mid-term election is the cycle when virtually all county officers are up for election," said Jaeger. "It's the election that gives voters the opportunity to voice how they think their local government is being run."

Jaeger's prediction is also based upon information collected from the state's county auditors on Friday that shows the number of absentee ballots requested is up from previous years in certain counties. Jaeger believes that the increase in absentee voting is a result of the increased promotion to vote absentee by the state's political parties and other interest groups. Jaeger and the state's county auditors have seen an increase in absentee ballot applications due to mass mailings conducted by the political parties and special interest groups.

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¹ Voting age population based on estimates from the North Dakota State Census Data Center at North Dakota State University, Fargo.